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# CHAPTER 3

## SAFETY INSPECTIONS

### HOW TO CONDUCT AND DOCUMENT SAFETY INSPECTIONS

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# CHAPTER 3

## SAFETY INSPECTIONS

### HOW TO CONDUCT AND DOCUMENT SAFETY INSPECTIONS

#### 3.00 INTRODUCTION

Safety inspections are a mandatory requirement of the Department's Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) and the California Occupational Health and Safety Administration (Cal-OSHA) regulations. Safety inspections are required at all Caltrans owned, rented, or leased facilities and include the grounds, parking lots, and perimeter fence areas adjacent to Caltrans facilities.

#### 3.01 PURPOSE

Details are provided outlining the process for conducting and documenting safety inspections. Inspections will identify and reduce safety and health hazards that could contribute to occupational injury or illness.

#### 3.02 BACKGROUND

The conducting of safety inspections is based on Section 3203 of the General Industry Safety Orders (GISO) that require:

“ . . . a system for identifying and evaluating workplace hazards, including scheduled periodic inspections to identify unsafe conditions and unsafe work practices.”

At Caltrans, the “. . . system for identifying and evaluating workplace hazards, including scheduled periodic inspections . . . ,” is expected to be accomplished through regularly scheduled safety inspections.

#### 3.03 POLICY STATEMENT

Supervisors shall schedule, conduct, and document safety inspections in all work areas under their jurisdiction to identify and reduce physical and/or environmental hazards that could contribute to injuries or illnesses.

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### 3.04 TYPES OF SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Safety inspections are classified as: (1) Informal, (2) Formal, and (3) Special.

#### 1. Informal Inspections

Informal inspections shall be performed on a continuous basis. District Safety Officers (DSOs) will conduct informal inspections when they visit a worksite and should be performed in cooperation with the supervisor. Supervisors will routinely conduct informal inspections in the workplace and should discuss the inspection process during regularly scheduled safety meetings.

In the course of normal daily activities, supervisors and employees shall visually inspect the work area to identify unsafe conditions and/or acts and initiate corrective action as deemed necessary or appropriate. Each employee should be alert to hazardous conditions that may cause an incident or illness. If a condition is discovered, the employee must take corrective action to mitigate the hazardous condition. This may include reporting the condition to a supervisor.

Informal inspections can be conducted with minimum documentation, but any and all deficiencies, no matter how minor, must be documented along with the steps taken to correct the situation. Supervisors shall record the specific findings and corrective actions taken, including the dates corrections were made and/or scheduled.

#### 2. Formal Inspections

Formal inspections require a walk-through of a facility or worksite for the purpose of identifying unsafe conditions and/or acts. Formal inspections must be documented. The documentation must include the specifics of an observed hazard and the dates by which the hazard will be corrected.

Formal inspections are conducted by DSOs and/or building managers/facility personnel in cooperation with local supervisors and employees. Building managers should discuss inspection schedules with local supervisors prior to inspections. Inspections should be agreed upon and be conducted at times and in a manner that will minimize disruptions of scheduled work.

Building managers, DSOs or individuals responsible for the operation of a Caltrans facility are to establish an inspection schedule for each facility under their jurisdiction. Formal inspections **must** be conducted **at all fixed worksites** whenever conditions warrant, but **not less often than once a year**. Fixed worksites include all Caltrans owned, rented, and/or leased facilities.

Supervisors and employees are expected to cooperate with building managers or facility personnel during safety inspections. First-line supervisors shall retain copies of all documentation covering their worksite safety inspections for one (1) year. The District or Headquarters Health and Safety (H&S) Officer or staff are available to assist and/or participate in the conducting of formal safety inspections.

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The following should be included in formal inspections: parking lots; loading docks; driveways; exits and other wall openings; windows; floors; walkways; stairs; ramps; platforms; electrical panels and wiring; illumination; ventilation; heating and cooling; fire prevention equipment; water fountains; first aid kits; food service area; rest rooms; training rooms; etc.

### 3. Special Inspections

Special inspections are performed in response to reports of alleged unsafe acts and/or conditions or to evaluate the hazards or health risks that may be associated with existing and/or new substances, processes, procedures, or equipment. Inspection response time to these special circumstances shall be based upon the severity of the identified hazard. A special inspection may also be conducted in conjunction with an accident investigation.

Serious and/or life threatening hazards shall be acted upon **immediately** by the supervisor or responsible person in charge. Specific actions may include stopping a work activity or taking any other measures necessary to protect employees, the public, the facility, and/or equipment. The hazard must be corrected or the situation or unsafe condition neutralized.

For non-serious situations, a safety inspection may be conducted as soon as possible after an initial report, identification, or recognition of a hazard.

Special inspections are conducted by building managers/facility personnel or members of the District or Headquarters Health and Safety Office upon request and in cooperation with local supervisors and employees. Special inspections **must** be documented. The documentation must include specific identification of observed hazards and the dates by which the hazards will be corrected. Follow-up procedures must be performed to assure that the identified hazards are mitigated in a timely manner.

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### **3.05 RESPONSIBILITY FOR INSPECTIONS AND CORRECTIONS**

#### **1. Supervisors**

Before starting work, each supervisor and/or employee should visually inspect his/her work area, motor vehicle, and/or equipment for unsafe conditions. Any alleged unsafe condition and/or act that is observed should be reported to the supervisor immediately. Supervisors shall initiate appropriate corrective action.

If a supervisor believes that his/her employees are working where unsafe conditions may exist, they shall immediately investigate the situation. Employees are to be directed to temporarily perform some other task; or the situation will be declared safe and employees are to proceed with their assigned duties.

A supervisor should determine if an alleged unsafe condition can be handled routinely or if a condition requires immediate action. If needed, second-line supervisors can be consulted to assist in developing a plan to correct the condition.

If an unsafe condition exists and the supervisor is not available, employees are to contact another supervisor or the District Health and Safety Office for assistance.

#### **2. Second-Line Supervisors**

Second-line supervisors are responsible to monitor their subordinate supervisors to ensure that informal and formal inspections are conducted at each worksite on a regular basis as requested or required. They shall periodically review the inspection documentation to ensure all recommended corrective actions are appropriate and performed in a timely manner. If the corrective action required incurs costs not originally in the budget, second-line supervisors shall assist in developing and/or arranging for budgeting.

### 3.06 INSPECTION GUIDELINES

The following are general guidelines for conducting safety inspections. These guidelines focus on formal inspections but some elements of the process are applicable to all inspections.

When conducting a safety inspection:

1. Use a checklist (example in Appendix A.) Review the checklist before the inspection begins.
2. Inspect the entire work area or facility.
3. Prepare an inspection sequence - inspect in one area at a time.  
(Focus on one room at a time, one floor at a time.)
4. A supervisor or someone familiar with the facility and operation should accompany the inspector to answer questions that may arise during the inspection.
5. Ask affected employees who work in the area for input. Try to resolve questions during the inspection, rather than going back a second time.
6. Focus on unsafe acts and/or conditions.
7. Document observed hazard(s) clearly and accurately.
8. Document the participants.
9. Following an inspection, it should be agreed upon that;
  - a. reasonable dates for correction (based upon the hazard) will be set;
  - b. priorities for correcting the hazards are set;
  - c. non-serious hazards are corrected as soon as possible;
  - d. serious hazards are corrected immediately;
  - e. if correction cannot be handled in a timely manner, the following measures will be taken to protect employees:
    - 1) work procedure(s) are changed;
    - 2) machine(s) are taken out of service;
    - 3) operation(s) will be stopped; and/or
    - 4) any necessary action(s) will be taken to protect employees.
10. Prepare a written report.
11. A copy of the written report shall be sent for review to first-line and second-line supervisors, District/Headquarters Health and Safety Officers and/or, other appropriate management personnel.

**NOTE:** Safety inspection and/or operational review checklists are available from the District or Headquarters Health and Safety Office. A sample of an office check list is shown in Appendix A. This checklist can be removed from the manual, copied, and replaced.

### 3.07 DISTRICT HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER REVIEW

When District Health and Safety Officers or staff conduct an informal, formal or special review they shall:

- Ensure that the review assists the supervisor by providing input-lending expertise and knowledge;
- Focus on gathering and analyzing information and making impartial observations to help the supervisor manage his/her program. Ask for input during the review. Keep focused on the purpose of the review and not on peripheral non-safety items;
- Not assume that the supervisor has set up or maintains his/her records in the same manner as the Health and Safety staff person or other supervisors;
- Request that a person familiar with the record/file system accompany the Health and Safety staff, if necessary, to answer questions during the review;
- Review training records to ensure that employees are trained regarding basic hazards to all places of employment as well as hazards unique to each job assignment;  
(*Cal-OSHA § 3203(a)(7) GISO.*)
- Review records of scheduled and periodic inspections to identify unsafe conditions and work practices. These records shall include the following: the name of the person(s) conducting the inspection; the unsafe conditions and/or work practices that have been identified; and the action taken to correct them. These records shall be maintained for at least one (1) year. (*Cal-OSHA § 3203(b)(1) GISO.*)
- Document the observed deficiencies clearly and accurately in the following manner:
  - A. Prioritize the deficiencies, focus first on serious and imminent hazards;
  - B. Set priority for correcting the deficiencies;
  - C. Set reasonable dates for correction of deficiencies;
  - D. Send the first-line supervisor a report containing your findings with instructions or information regarding how identified deficiency(ies) are to be corrected;
    - 1. The report should contain a sequential presentation of the findings and procedures to carry out the recommendations; and
    - 2. Copies of the written report may also be sent to the second-line supervisor, or others as deemed appropriate.

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Described below are two types of reviews: (1) Operational Review and (2) Health and Safety Review.

## **1. Operational Review**

Operational reviews are designed to examine field operating techniques and procedures to ensure they are conducted in compliance with departmental policy. Operational Reviews cover field type work such as: lane closures, lane closure signs, cone placement, pilot car operations, vehicle parking, use of barriers or shadow vehicles, workers on foot, truck-mounted signs, flagging, etc.

The Health and Safety Officer may wish to reference the following when conducting reviews: Maintenance Program Manual; Construction Program Manual; Surveys Program Manual; other program-specific manuals; various Code(s) of Safe Operating Practices (CSOP); emergency action plans; Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS); Standard Plans; and other departmental reference materials.

District Health and Safety Officers and their staff have full authority to conduct Operational Reviews to ensure uniform compliance with departmental policy.

## **2. Health and Safety Review**

The Health and Safety review is a retrospective examination of how well the Department's safety program has been implemented and maintained by the supervisor and his/her chain-of-command. To ensure compliance with the IIPP, the Health and Safety review shall include, at a minimum, the following requirements:

- Ensure the supervisor has a copy of the Caltrans Safety Manual readily available in hard copy or online for all employees to review and that employees know who is responsible for the safety program in their area.  
(*Cal-OSHA § 3203(a)(1) GISO*)
- Review safety records to ensure that safety meetings, facility inspections and operation reviews are scheduled and conducted on a regular basis and documented.  
(*Cal-OSHA § 3203(a)(3)(4), GISO, and § 1509(e) CSO*);
- Review safety records to ensure that occupational injury accidents and illnesses are investigated and documented..  
(*Cal-OSHA § 3203(a)(4)(A)(5) GISO*).

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State law prohibits reprisal or taking disciplinary action against any employee that identified and/or reported an unsafe condition, act or practice in connection with any work activity.

Employees should be informed of any action(s) taken to correct any reported unsafe condition, act or practice.

**APPENDIX A -CHECKLIST FOR OFFICE LOCATIONS**

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**SAFETY INSPECTIONS SAMPLE CHECKLIST**  
PM-S-011 (NEW 11/98)

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**A CHECKLIST FOR OFFICE LOCATIONS**

LOCATION:

DATE:

CONDUCTED BY:

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>Item</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Name of responsible person for work place identified.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of Injury and Illness Prevention Program.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety Manual available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety meetings scheduled and conducted.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety inspections scheduled and conducted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety training scheduled and conducted.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accidents reported, investigated, and documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All applicable records maintained.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bulletin boards with Cal-OSHA and other notices visible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency phone numbers available.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	First aid kit / supplies available / replenished.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency lighting available.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Person trained in first aid / CPR available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exits routes clearly marked.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency action plan available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Panic hardware on exit doors.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fire doors kept closed / open as required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fire extinguishers easily located.

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**SAFETY INSPECTIONS SAMPLE CHECKLIST**

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<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Item</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fire extinguisher maintained and dated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stairways with slip-resistant treads.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aisles, stairs, floors clean and clear of obstructions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cabinets secured to walls to avoid tipping over.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No heavy objects on cabinets / windows sills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Glass doors / partitions impact resistant.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minimum of 24 inches for walking around office furniture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work surfaces clean and orderly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minimum of 44 inches for walking in hallways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electrical cords not a tripping hazard.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electrical cords in good repair and properly grounded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electrical panels not blocked.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electrical extension cords not used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MSDS sheets available, if applicable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spilled materials or liquids cleaned up immediately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toilets and wash facilities clean and sanitary.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work areas adequately illuminated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Materials piled, stacked, do not create hazard.

COMMENTS:

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CORRECTION MADE:

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This checklist is not a substitute for, or legal interpretation of Cal-OSHA standards. It is meant to be a guide to evaluate and correct potential unsafe conditions in the workplace.